

## Message

**From:** Moran, Robin [moran.robin@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 8/30/2018 11:35:43 AM  
**To:** Birgfeld, Erin [Birgfeld.Erin@epa.gov]; Charmley, William [charmley.william@epa.gov]; Olechiw, Michael [olechiw.michael@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** RE: FYI - EPA press release yesterday on the hearings..

Thanks Erin...wonder why the press folks call these "listening sessions" ... I always thought that term was used for something more informal, like getting feedback on early policy direction – not a rulemaking hearing.

Also the NYTimes climate section picked up the hearings, with quotes from Margo Oge and David Friedman

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The New York Times

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# Climate Fwd:

Wednesday, August 29, 2018

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Welcome to the **Climate Fwd:** newsletter. The New York Times climate team emails readers once a week with stories and insights about climate change. [Sign up here](#) to get it in your inbox.

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This week: An abridged guide to civic involvement. A pastor who's reviving the Poor People's Campaign, once led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and including environmental justice. And, before the long weekend, some recommended listening.

A shareable version of this week's newsletter [is here](#).

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The actor Ian Somerhalder at a public hearing in Mandeville, La., about a proposal to explore for oil in the state.  
*Julia Kumari Drapkin/NOLA.com The Times-Picayune, via Associated Press*

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# How to have your say



**Hiroko Tabuchi**  
@HirokoTabuchi

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It's one of the most consequential environmental rollbacks proposed by the Trump administration: an overhaul of fuel-efficiency standards for cars and light trucks that would significantly weaken one of former President Barack Obama's signature policies to combat global warming.

Now, that proposed rollback is going to the American public — that could mean you, dear reader — for a period of public comment.

But do public comments make a difference? And how exactly do you get involved?

One former official with broad experience of the rule-making process, Margo T. Oge, who led the transportation and air quality office at the Environmental Protection Agency, said that hearings can leave a lasting impression on officials. That's because they give the public a chance to interact with representatives from industry and other groups, like environmental organizations.

Ms. Oge recalled a public hearing that included the mother of a child with severe asthma sitting next to an oil executive. The proposal in question was to reduce sulfur in diesel oil, a measure designed to prevent respiratory and other illnesses, especially asthma in children.

The oil executive spoke first, and complained about the costs of meeting the standards.

Then the mother stepped up to speak. "She recounted how many times a year the child ended up at the hospital with asthma attacks, and was unable to play outdoors when air pollution was high," Ms. Oge said. "You could see how uncomfortable the executive became."

The government is legally required to respond to what it hears from the public — if not to individual comments, then to the main issues raised in them.

David Friedman, a former acting administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, pointed out that if the Trump administration's rollback is challenged in court, as expected, public comments — both for and against — will most likely become evidence in the case.

"If the courts determine that regulators didn't take public comments into proper account," Mr. Friedman said, "they could overturn the rule as arbitrary and capricious."

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There are two ways to make your voice heard. You can travel in person to a daylong public hearing in late September at one of three locations. The hearings start at 10 a.m. local time and continue until 5 p.m. or until everyone has had a chance to speak.

- Sept. 24 at The Grand, 1401 Fulton St. in Fresno, Calif.
- Sept. 25 at The Dearborn Inn, 20301 Oakwood Blvd. in Dearborn, Mich.
- Sept. 26 at the DoubleTree, 1 Bigelow Square in Pittsburgh

If you want to speak at these meetings, remember to register at least 10 days in advance by writing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's point person for the meetings, Kil-Jae Hong, at [kil-jae.hong@dot.gov](mailto:kil-jae.hong@dot.gov). There'll be a lot of speakers, so plan to limit your comments to about five minutes.

Alternatively, you can register your opinion by [submitting a written comment](#). If you plan to do so, make sure you meet the Oct. 23 deadline. (For more information, you can revisit our [extensive coverage of the emissions rules rollback](#).)

"It's one of the hallmarks of our democracy that when we make regulations, we hear from the American people," Mr. Friedman said. "It's enshrined in law that public voices must be heard."

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**From:** Birgfeld, Erin

**Sent:** Thursday, August 30, 2018 5:43 AM

**To:** Moran, Robin <[moran.rob@epa.gov](mailto:moran.rob@epa.gov)>; Charmley, William <[charmley.william@epa.gov](mailto:charmley.william@epa.gov)>

**Subject:** FYI - EPA press release yesterday on the hearings..

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-and-dot-announce-three-public-hearings-proposed-safe-vehicles-rule>

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